

choose where my children shall go, but when you are having people from different families and then you are taking them to a baby-sitter, I want to know that the place where these children are congregated have fire inspection. I want to know that they have a sanitary inspection by the Health Department. I want to know that there is a character evaluation of care giver on charges of offenses against children including charges of abuse and neglect of their own children. I think this is important to my children, to your children, to the children in the State of Nebraska. The current law, the current license requires a limit of seven children to receive care with no more than two children under the ages of two. LB 372 proposes to do away with fire inspections, to do away with sanitary inspections, to do away with character references, and no limit, although we just adopted it, to limit it to nine children receiving care in a private home. As I understand it, it is to permit a return to the neighborhood baby-sitter concept, to establish public recognition that current licensing standards are unenforceable or to permit parents to make decisions about the care of their children without governmental interference but we are not interfering with parents' decision. The impact of this bill would be that the neighborhood baby-sitter in a rural area is clearly identified and her capabilities and moral character are common knowledge. This is not true in urban areas and the bill would affect the entire state. Having this many children that the bill would allow certainly taxes the woman who is a masterful person and can cope with all kinds of difficulties. What about the person who can't? It is important that parents have a decision to make. It is important that parents make a decision but why should the state not have a requirement that fire regulations should be enforced, that sanitary regulations should be available. These are important considerations. This is an attempt, and I am sure Senator Kelly in full honesty is trying to solve a problem as he sees it, isn't it unusual that in my thick file only persons from Grand Island are supporting his bill with one exception but that the urban communities of Lincoln and Omaha and Hastings and Norfolk and North Platte are not supporting this proposal. The people of Nebraska are not being disenfranchised with our current regulations as Senator Kelly would have you believe. The people of Nebraska have a choice, if they will take their child to a day care center or a day care home and which day care center or which day care home they will use. The people of Nebraska also have a choice to use a neighborhood sitter, to have someone come to the home of the parent or for the parent to take his or her child to a neighbor's place and that is allowed under current law. This is something that we should remember when you are talking about LB 372. I urge your opposition to this proposed bill.

PRESIDENT: Senator Fowler.

SENATOR FOWLER: I think Senator Barnett pointed out some of the points of confusion with the bill. Senator Marsh has done a good job of explaining how we are not just talking about a casual neighborhood baby-sitting situation, that we are talking about day care, possibly a fairly large day care, nine children, twelve hour service, seven days a week, things such as this. It could be nine infants or whatever. I have read over Senator Kelly's memo that he handed out